

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, August 26. 1707.

I Have been endeavouring to Temper our Minds about *Toulon*, and the Successes of the Allies before that Place; 'tis hard, that, let our good Fortune come never so fast, we always run before it—And if this Important Work is not Finish'd in a Week or a Fortnight at farthest, we are for despairing of its being done at all, finding fault with the Management, and the like. Now to prepare our Minds to expect other things, I have been giving you the Summary Account of the Provision the *French* have made to defend 'it; the Works, the Guns, the Troops—And if these do their Duty, and what may be expected from Men well resolv'd, and well provided, then we cannot expect it will be such a light piece of Work as some talk of.

O-but say some again, If it be not taken very quickly, the Marshal *De Tessé* will have

got an Army together at *Aix*, as strong as the Besiegers, and they will be closed in between the Town, with a numerous Garrison and the *French* Army.

This is true, but if this fall out, we are told the Duke of *Savoy*, has also Reinforcements coming from all Parts, and the Garrisons of all *Lombardy* are drawing for their Supplies; as the Affair of *Naples* is happily carried on, and the Success there beyond expectation, they may soon draw off from thence 7 or 8000 Men, so that if the Siege should cost them 20000 Men, they will be as strong at the End of it as they are at the Beginning; and you will not find, that the *French* will care to look 40000 Men in the Face, if they can avoid it.

And yet I cannot blame any body for being very Solicitous about this Matter, for who can be without concern for so great an Event:

Event as this Siege, on which the Sum of Affairs depends, and of which this may be said, the Ruine of either Party depends on it?

If the Town be taken, and those 41 Battalions reduc'd, as it is very probable they will be, and perhaps all made Prisoners of War, if they are not reliev'd; I believe no Man will question, but the *French* Affairs on that side are brought to the last extremity, *Marseilles* must follow, the Ships are lost or sunk, the Stores gone, the Cannon, Ammunition, &c. of all the Magazines lost, and the *French* entirely cut off from the *Mediterranean* Sea; *Languedoc* will be next, the Seat of the War; the *Camisars* will be reliev'd, King *Charles* of *Spain* supply'd, and a Door open'd to carry the Seat of War into *Spain*, and the *French* in short must be undone; I think it is not too much to say they must be undone, they can never stand it.

On the other hand, if the *French* by their numbers within the Town, and those numbers being supplied and relieved from without, should so maintain themselves, as not to be forc'd; if the *German* Army shou'd be so weaken'd by the Fatigues of the Siege, by the continual Sallies, and the extraordinary Fire of the Garrison, who have indeed a prodigious number of Cannon and Mortars, as that they should be oblig'd to raise the Siege, I think it will be no immodest Suggestion, to say they are Ruin'd also.

Not but that they may perhaps make a bold retreat, and by the help of the Fleet carry off their Cannon; but they can never retreat from such an Undertaking as this, but that they will be expos'd to a thousand Dangers and Difficulties, and stand in need of so much Recruiting, Refreshment and Supplies, as that they will not recover their Superiority in the Field again, nor be able to keep the Insulting *French* from entering *Fiedmont*, and in their turn paying them in the same kind, at the Gates of *Turin*.

So that on the whole we may say, that upon the fate of this Siege depends the whole Matter, and the whole Confederacy seems to be stak'd upon the Adventure; all that is prudent, wary, bold, and brave, will be exerted on both Sides; the Attacks will

without doubt be furious, the Defences obstinate, and many a thousand brave Fellows will lose their Lives on both sides, upon the Walls and Outworks of this one City.

It's none of my Business to tell you what is our share in a Work of this great Consequence, nor to Preach the Efficiency of our remote Applications to Heaven for the Success of it; if I can convince you that all depends upon it, that the Crisis of the whole War turns upon it; that if you gain it *France* is undone, and if we lose it we are all undone; if I can open your Eyes to the Consequences of this great Affair; I cannot think I am am talking to an Age so Unchristianis'd, but it must be natural now and then to look up—Now and then to consider who gives Victory, and who suffers the Children of *Israel* to flie before their Enemies—And with all my.

I do not dwell on such things. I know People do not love to be told of Praying, nor do they care to be beholden to their Maker for any Victory; they think they can get without him——They are more apt to think of that when they are beaten, than when they are Fighting.

However, Gentlemen, whether you will look up or look down for help, that is not to me, but give me leave to remind you here of some of the Fatal Consequences of a Miscarriage in this Case; if good Success follows the Enterprize that will mend it self, but let us look in, and see what will be the Case if it miscarry, for nothing is Infallible.

And First, how will it fare with King *Charles* in *Spain*, and how must he be reliev'd? 'tis evident the distance of Place, and the uncertainty of the Passage are such from *England*, it can never be Rational to say, he can depend upon us, there is no time for it, it cannot be expected—And if the Design upon *Thoulon* be baulk'd, from whence can he expect Relief; *Naples* as now recovered may help him a little, but it cannot be rational to expect, that he should maintain himself in that Country, against the numerous Armies of the *French* and *Spaniards*, who will be upon him as soon as ever the heats of the Season will permit them to take the Field.

Upon

Upon the Success of this Expedition it all depends, as the Face of Affairs now seems to stand, the *Catalonians* can make no considerable Resistance against the forces which are coming together on their Frontiers, as well *French as Spaniards*—And if this Enterprize does not by its Success make some Impression deeper than ordinary on the *French Affairs*, and oblige them to draw off from the Field on that side; I confess, I see little but Destruction coming upon them, there they must quit *Catalonia*, *Barcelona* must fall into the Hands of the *French* again, and that miserable People be again expos'd to the Cruel Resentments of their Conquerors.

Secondly, Who shall defend *Portugal* against the Insults of the *Spaniards*, and *French*? what must the King of *Portugal* do with a naked Country, and a Soulless People? When the Duke of *Berwick* shall enter his Frontiers at the Head of a *French Army*; how shall the *Portuguese*, who turn'd their Backs at *Almanza*, when they had a brave Infantry to support them; how I say shall they resist a Victorious Enemy when left to their own Defence; if the *Imperialists* are driven out of *Provence*, and the *French* stand their Ground; nay, if they do not Penetrate into *Catalonia*, and rescue King *Charles* and his Allies; I do not see that 'tis any way possible to prevent the Ruine of the King of *Portugal*, but by his going off from the Alliance, and joining against us, and as one of these will perhaps be better for him, 'tis plain, it will be worse for us, and he may find Cause to dislike it at last also?

But this is not all, if the *French* stand this brush, and the *Imperial Army* is oblig'd to retreat; nay, suppose them to get off with out a brush, any body will allow them to be so maim'd, so broken and disappainted, that they will hardly make a second Attempt of that kind; and if I may say so, I question whether they would be able to stand their own Ground at Home, and so the War would be carried back into their own Country again, and the Duke of *Savoy* may expect to see the *French* again under the Walls of *Turin*, when he may not be in so good a Condition to Fight, than as he was before.

But to come a little nearer, the *French Insolence* would be again intollerable, when all the great Detachments made from the Upper *Rhine*, and from the *Netherlands* should come back again perhaps doubled in number; have they been Superiour to the *Imperialists* on the *Rhine*, tho' with but a small Army of 35000 Men, have they Ravag'd the *Palatinate*, the Circles of *Swabia* and *Franconia*, and all the Country beyond the *Neckar* to the Gates of *Frankfort*, and are they still Masters of the Field, tho' they have made stronger Detachments, to assist in *Dauphine* and *Provence*; how much more shall they overpower the Confederates, when from that side again they shall perhaps receive strong Detachments back again, and sufficient to enable them to pierce the very Bowels of the Empire, recover *Bavaria*, and Distract all things again as they did before?

Let any Man look into the State of Things on every side, and they will see if not blinded by some Prejudices, too deeply rooted for me to reach, that the whole weight of Affairs depends very much upon the Success of this Enterprize.

Nor do I say this at all to lessen the Opinion of our People as to the Success, or to render it doubtful; I hope, and firmly believe, the Valour and Conduct of the *Imperial Armies* and their Great Generals, will surmount all Obstacles, will force their way thro' all Difficulties, will Fight their way thro' all Opposition, and carry the Point—But I would not have People think 'tis done with a Breath, that it will come without Blows, or be carried without Fighting.

Had it been possible for the *Germans* to have been at the Walls of *Thoulon*, before the *Marschal Thesse* could have reach'd it, and while the Garrison had been but small, and things out of Order, as they were at first, I believe it had been a cheaper Purchase.

But I am so far from wondering that was not done, that really I wonder more they got to it at all—And had not Prince *Eugene*, who always out-witted the *French*, so entirely deluded them, that they never look'd for him on that side; had he not, by
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the visible Application of all his Affairs, discover'd all the Winter a direct Tendency towards the Side of *Barcellonette, Ambrun*, and the Valley of *Aouft*, and never so much as cast his Eye this way: The *French* had never neglected the Banks of the *Var*, which if they had been well fortify'd, and a good Line cast up there from the Sea to the Mountains, which it seems is not above a League and a Quarter or thereabouts, and might well have been secur'd. I say, had this been done, Prince *Eugene* had never made the Attempt; a flying Camp there of about 12000 Men had effectually secur'd *Provence* from this Attempt, or the Army must all have come by Sea, which they would hardly have done.

But the Blow is struck; the Dye is cast; *Cesar* has pass'd the *Rubicon*, and nothing now can defend *Thoulon*, but a Wall of Bones, a strong and numerous Garrison — Which the *French* have very dexterously provided and pos'd with great Advantage; if these can keep their Post, the *Germans* will have difficult Work to carry on the Siege: 'Tis not an easie thing to maintain advanc'd Works, such as Trenches, Batteries, and the like, when the Enemy within is numerous enough to make Sallies with 4 to 6000 Men at a time, the Trenches cannot be guarded to that Degree, and the Works will be ruin'd upon every Occasion.

It was thus, the *Turks* at *Buda*, beat off the Duke of *Lorrain*, with as great and as good an Army as this, and made him quit the Siege, after he had lost a great many brave Fellows before it.

The grand Dispute therefore before *Thoulon* will be, first break up this Camp, and dislodge the *French* from their Intrenchments; till they do which, the Attack upon the Town will be very Difficult, Bloody, and Tedious.

But Resolution and good Conduct will go a great way to do this; nor do I apprehend but it will be found Practicable, to cut off this Attendant upon the Siege, and come to close work upon the Counterscarps, of which we wait to hear the Particulars.

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